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OXFORD POETRY

1918

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OXFORD POETRY

1918

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OXFORD

B. H. BLACKWELL, BROAD STREET

1918

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
ANON (NON-COLL.)	
BY PROXY	1
BASIL BLACKWELL (MERTON)	
AT THE PAUPER ASYLUM	2
C. BURCHARDT (MAGDALEN)	
COMPLAINT	3
M. ST. CLARE BYRNE (SOMERVILLE)	
"AND ONE FELL BY THE WAYSIDE . . ."	4
J. E. A. CARVER (MAGDALEN)	
EVENING	5
E. P. CHASE (MAGDALEN)	
ON A BIRTHDAY	6
WILFRED CHILDE (MAGDALEN)	
SEA FAIRY	7
AGE GOTHIQUE DORÉ	8
ROSA INNOCENS	9
GERALD H. CROW (HERTFORD)	
TRENCH VISION	10
MADHOUSE GARDEN	11
G. D. DESMOND (SOMERVILLE)	
HOME-COMING	12
AGE	13
E. C. DICKINSON (NON-COLL.)	
A TAVERN LILT	14
T. W. EARP (EXETER)	
OUR LADY OF LIGHT	16
E. F. A. GEACH (HOME STUDENT)	
ROMANCE	18
RETROSPECT	18
E. F. A. GEACH (HOME STUDENT) AND D. E. A. WALLACE (SOMERVILLE)	
BALLADE OF LADIES WHO DIED FOR LOVE	19
K. GIBBERD (ST. HILDA'S HALL)	
WHEN I AM OLD	20
RUSSELL GREEN (QUEEN'S)	
FAITH	21
HILLS	22
REGINALD HARRIS (C.C.C.)	
SONG	23
FRAGMENT FROM THE "LAMENT FOR BION"	24

Contents

MERCY HARVEY (ST. HILDA'S HALL)	PAGE
SONG	25
H. C. HARWOOD (BALLIOL)	
INCOMPATIBILITY	26
DEDICATION OF AN UNWRITTEN MASTERPIECE TO A WOMAN AS YET UNKNOWN	27
LUISA HEWITT (HOME STUDENT)	
"YOU LIT YOUR CIGARETTE FROM MINE"	28
AVE ATQUE VALE	29
R. M. HEWITT (KEBLE)	
ITER PERSICUM	30
GAUDIUM IN CÆLO	31
E. E. ST. L. HILL (KEBLE)	
PARTING	32
ALDOUS HUXLEY (BALLIOL)	
TWO SONGS	33
SONG OF POPLARS	34
C. R. JURY (MAGDALEN)	
A SONNET TO A FRIEND	35
AN EPITAPH	35
MARGARET LEIGH (SOMERVILLE)	
TWO EPITAPHS	36
SONNET: THE JOURNALIST	37
E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN (MAGDALEN)	
THE INCANTATION	38
ROBERT NICHOLS (TRINITY)	
CLOSING LINES FROM "POLYPHEMUS HIS PASSION"	41
L. RICE-OXLEY (KEBLE)	
THE OPENING OF THE GRAVE OF ARTHUR AND GUINEVERE AT GLASTONBURY	45
DOROTHY L. SAYERS (SOMERVILLE)	
PYGMALION	46
HELEN SIMPSON (HOME STUDENT)	
THE HEAD OF THE TABLE	49
AEROPLANE, JUNE 6TH	50
L. A. G. STRONG (WADHAM)	
RUFUS PRAYS	51
IN THE GARDEN	52
SHERARD VINES (NEW COLLEGE)	
PERMISSION	53
SUMMER	54
D. E. A. WALLACE (SOMERVILLE)	
RIVER-POOLS	55
LIFE AND I	56

BY PROXY

YOU will not lure me with your charms
Or win me back again
Because you held me in your arms
And I forgot my pain.

'Twas not for you my spirit yearned
That night of fierce desire ;
The flame in which we met and burned
Drew from an alien fire.

I shall not win my lady's grace,
Her eyes are still and cold ;
I may not find a resting-place
Before my life grows old.

One thought alone rejoicing stirs
And shall, when all is done—
That in your arms my soul met hers
And we became as one.

AT THE PAUPER ASYLUM

WITH naked turf-plots three by six in symmetric precision spread
You see, between its walls of red, the graveyard of the lunatics.

No cenotaph or obelisk holds memory in graven speech ;
Sole epitaph accorded each a number on a painted disk.

In nameless uniformity, with few to know and none to weep,
While space allows, their freehold keep the men that God has made awry.

And these within their straitened fold, who nothing owned, were owned of
none,

Possess of all beneath the Sun what God and man could not withhold.

So close they lie, a skeleton might give his rotting friend a nudge
And say, " If you or I were judge, we should not moulder here alone.

" Lest we might harm our fellow-men, they prisoned us, and now exhaust,
To speed a cosmic holocaust, the blood and gold they grudged us then.

" The world had seen less misery with us for prince and presbyter,
Who sometimes knew the fools we were, and in our folly could not lie.

" But happier we who lived in scorn, and dying, passed from human thought
Than they whose sophistry has bought the curses of a race unborn."

COMPLAINT

MY love has left me. Let my heart forget
The happy days and moments of our past
That in the future I shall not regret
The worship of a love that could not last.

Make me remember there are things apart
From dreamy love and visionary truth
And teach me to forget how once my heart
Did love with all the tenderness of youth.

Yes, teach me to forget—and how to live
Without the joy of hope. For I have seen
How every single pleasure life can give
Must needs sow seeds of misery between.

No more of love. Since at such heavy cost
It must be bought and even then be lost.

M. ST. CLARE BYRNE
(SOMERVILLE)

“AND ONE FELL BY THE WAYSIDE . . .”

SCHOLAR, and man of letters, and daintily nurtured,
You were one with your peers,
Leaving the half-told story,
Throwing away the dear things of this life-time—
All you found was the steady, silent effort,
Only the toilsome moulding, the shaping the weapon,
None of the keen sword-glory.

Not for you the crown and the consummation,
Not the battle-death, sharp, swift, and kindly ;
Only the early plodding on, half blindly,
Only seeing the end by the faith of the spirit,
Only the hardest of all, the preparation,
All the heart-breaking spadework,
Formulas, initiation ;
Only the snows of December . . .

Under the snow the quiet brown land lies sleeping,
Waiting the breath of Spring—
God will remember.

J. E. A. CARVER
(*MAGDALEN*)

EVENING

THE children play, and the old folk talk
In the silent village square,
While the wagons jolt, and the belfry's note
Comes floating through the air.

The white owl hoots from his lofty seat ;
In the fields the rabbits play ;
The weazel squeaks, and the red fox sneaks
From his lair at close of day.

The final signs of departing day
Burst out in its changing hues,
While the stars pearl out in the azure sky,
And silent fall the dews.

E. P. CHASE
(*MAGDALEN*)

ON A BIRTHDAY

AM I a man at last? I feared to think
Not long ago, that I could ever be
Older than twenty-one. Eternity
Is not more vast if one lean o'er its brink
Than are the cool sane draughts of years we drink
After the brilliance and the ecstasy
Of a decisive year. Majority
We hail ; past commoner birthdays we slink.

We love all action that is glorious
It matters little whether, in our aim
We seem to fail or are victorious.
But in the lesser things and lesser hours
We must—how can we?—spend our treasured powers
For duties that can never bring us fame.

SEA FAIRY

ALL day long the waves wander and the winds cry,
And there are blue stones sparkling by the shores ;
But with evening there cometh a silence over the void sky
And the sea is hushed along her coral corridors.

Then the mer-girls fall asleep, their singing is over,
Their golden limbs lie stretched along the sands ;
And wearily nods the Sun like a giant lover,
In a blood-red bath of dreams, with lilies in his hands.

On white wings screaming come the elvish gulls
But lo ! where a glint of turquoise divides the cliffs,
Where the Halcyon Birds whom the rest of the world thinks fools
Are crossing the Ocean becalmed on their amorous skiffs.

AGE GOTHIQUE DORÉ

To G. C.

KING Richard in his garden walks royal,
His mantle green being wrought with scarlet flowers,
His hand holding a coloured book of hours.
His coat all gold, gilden his feet withal.

King Richard walks in his garden by Thames-side,
Hearing the bells of high Westminster ring,
And the sound of the chaunt of the monks echoing,
Singing each in his stall to God Crucified.

Golden the sun descends beyond Thames-water,
Golden flash out London steeples and spires,
Their vanes burn and turn in the day's last fires.

About the King the flowers of the garden fade,
And in star-light he walks on, yet lonelier,
His heart being filled with the peace of the Mother Maid.

ROSA INNOCENS

O YOUNG fresh rose, O tender rose,
O rose so young, so newly born,
Whose petals fair do now uncloze
To the radiant kisses of the air,
And the shell-soft lips of the morn,
To the heavens holy and bare !
Lovely, young, fresh rose,
Frail-framed and lapped in dew,
O born like a virgin anew
After a time of bale and scorn,
Storm-wind shattering the boughs
Of the tall trees turn by turn :
But thou art still abiding
Amid the slender veins of thy house,
Like an immaculate lady,
Very beautiful and causing the eyes of the beholders
To weep strange tears of joy !

GERALD H. CROW
(HERTFORD)

TRENCH VISION

A GREAT bee potted round the room
And gossipped like a child to itself,
Investigating bloom by bloom
The lilac on the window-shelf.

Outside among the garden beds
The wind went like a laughing boy,
And caught the poppies by the heads,
And chased the honey-bees for joy.

The slanting patch of sunlight crept
Along the floor, across the wall,
And I was there and laughed and wept,
And laughed again to see it all.

MADHOUSE GARDEN

A LOOF he heareth yet the vulgar urge
And throng his realm, and groweth glad of bars.
It is a gentle kingly thaumaturge
Hath made a net of little silver stars,
And snared contentment, that great golden carp,
The moon contentment, that shall never die,
And charmeth him upon a tender harp,
And hath him in a net of lazuli.
Thus I shall hear you crying presently,
And shall look forth with questioning dream-dimmed eyes
Upon your turmoil and perplexity,
Out of whatever hell or paradise
The maker of nets is come to, bye and bye ;
And shall not understand or sympathize.

HOME-COMING

I COME back to my garment of hills
Now my soul is laid bare.
For I gave him my lips and my limbs
And my hands, and long hair—
I gave him all things that were mine,
This my garment of clay.
So have need of my garment of hills,
To hide me away—

O high hills, O loved hills, O hills
That are healing and strength,
I have grown to your measure at last,
I can wear you at length.

I have loved, so my soul is upgrown,
Adult in its nakedness
And I, as the naked, cry.

* * * * *
And the wild, kind hills are my dress.

AGE

I THINK that I am old. Silent I am with sorrow
At the beauteous sky that holds the new morrow.
I think that I am old. The lark sings words to me,
Who erst sung but Music. And in the ancient sea,
I can see old colours that I have seen elsewhere. . . .
Purple orchids hurt me : and everything that's fair—
Buttercups and distance and smoke, and people's bodies.
O, I cannot get away from the places where my God is.
Laughter is a thing to strain and angle for,
My heart is quick and shrinking and pains me at its core.
I am older, older, than the Earth—O, I am old.
If I should be older, colder, than the stars, far off and cold ? . . .
Once I danced and sang and capered on the grass
At the cool close of day, when shadows creep and pass.
When shadows link, and lengthen, and slowly become—nought.
Light flies, and shadow dies without its sustenance.
And stars shine out most silently, like jewels quietly wrought.
Not even then I ceased, nor paused upon my dance.
Now, I am struck and smitten with beauty's poignancy.
Now, I am hurt with wonder, closed in from ecstasy.
No ecstasy is mine. I cannot get away.
Every way I turn—myself. By night, by day,
My face, my soul, my body, the people that I know —
Ah, no more free fashioning of worlds that gleam and go.

* * * * *

I have grown to be my own world, my world with heart and pain
And he that has found himself can be never lost again.
And he that is quite awake cannot dream his dreams again.

A TAVERN LILT

To W. W.

I DO not know more wonderful respite
Than to sit within the Inns of swinkèd lords
With a mate upon the left hand and the right
And tankards of good ale upon the boards.

My lads, the World for us when we're in yoke—
To Hell and through to Heaven twice a day ;
While Lancashire's a splendid land for folk
Who'd woo a lass or taste a knuckled fray.

And when we're free, with Freedom's cap fast on,
How shall we bend new lives to jollity ?
What songs our Will and Tom would you have won
Making the home-thatch rich for you and me ?

Our Will, you're young—the lathe you scorn to turn—
And sorrow life is not all Wigan Fair ;
While I'd seek luck beside a gipsy's burn
With a brace of whippets for a rabbits snare.

And you, Tom, you—what would you draw for prize ?
A quickened pulse for the lass within your arms—
With her to walk i' the lanes at the moon's rise,
By the downland's edge and over the sleeping farms.

My mates, you're English and o' the very best—
With no mean thought i' the length or breadth o' you :
Not Galahads, but yet to stand confessed
With finest hearts as ever heroes knew.

Because o' simple, wide, and proudest worth
As English soil may give to English rule.
My head is bared before your richened birth,
My hand grips yours in cider-time and Yule !

A Tavern Lilt

And so again—more wonderful respite
I know not in the Inns of swinkèd lords,
With you upon my left hand and my right
And plenty of good ale upon the boards !

A health, a health, my lads, for very joy !
With such as you beside for love and life
We can with ease Dame Sorrowful destroy ;
E'en toast the maid who will not be my wife !

OUR LADY OF LIGHT

ON those eternal peaks of thought,
Where her bright crystal towers shine,
The many precious treasures brought
Seem its clear walls to incarnadine.

For all the varied colours heaped
There mingle in one general flush,
As through that lovely place there leaped
The rose-leaf burnish of a blush.

The golden arrowheads of wit,
The laughers of refined sense,
Diamond of sorrows infinite,
Calm, open looks of innocence,

And rubies, lovers' burning hearts—
With these she decks her diadem,
Transmuting, by her learned arts,
Each to its own peculiar gem.

The jostling, crowded jewels show
In sparkling piles where colours dance,
And with angelic rosy glow
The ramparts of her palace glance.

And there she busied is, alone,
To make of beauty beauties fresh,
Or, seated queenly on her throne,
Weaves fate into a glittering mesh.

For every soul she gazes through
And sees its deepest-hid desires,
As though we were but drops of dew,
Transparent, lit by alien fires.

Our Lady of Light

This one she chooses ; it is clear
And burns with an intenser flame ;
But that, for a long age's year,
Leaves to the darkness whence it came.

While time itself grows weary, she
Still solitary sits to weave,
Until that last eternity
When all are taken, none to leave.

Then in her magic tissue hapt,
The new-clothed, fragrant earth shall run
In visionary radiance wrapped,
A dazzling sister to the sun,
And so Our Lady's work be done.

E. F. A. GEACH
(HOME STUDENT)

ROMANCE

"J'étais comme un autre Jason allant à la conquête de la toison d'or"
(MADEMOISELLE DE MAUPIN).

ROUND the next corner and in the next street
Adventure lies in wait for you.
Oh, who can tell what you may meet
Round the next corner and in the next street !
Could life be anything but sweet
When all is hazardous and new
Round the next corner and in the next street ?
Adventure lies in wait for you.

RETROSPECT

NOW I have fallen out of love
A year or two, I hold review
Of all the things I used to do,
Turning with fingers rational
The closed leaves of my passional.
And I am quite amazed, by Jove !
Wholly incredulous I smile—
So hard it is to reconcile
With this, my mere immediate me
The other self I used to be
You with the you that once was you—
Now I have fallen out of love
A year or two.

E. F. A. GEACH (HOME STUDENT)
D. E. A. WALLACE (SOMERVILLE)

BALLADE OF LADIES WHO DIED FOR LOVE

LADIES, why did ye all in vain
Seek death to end your misery ?
Why did ye not forget your pain
In new loves and new ecstasy ?
Ophelia racked with phantasy,
And Sigismunda, sick with rue—
Ladies, why did ye choose to die
When all the world was made for you ?

Wild Phœdra by thy passion slain,
CEnone, nymph of Thessaly,
Dido and lily-white Elaine,
O Queen who died for Antony,
Sappho and all thy poesy,
Juliet to thy dead love true—
Ladies, why did ye choose to die
When all the world was made for you ?

Fair Margaret distraught and fain
Beside thy phantom love to lie,
And Isabella who didst wane
Over thy pot of porphyry,
Aude and Isolde, tell me why,
Your lovers direly stricken thro',
You chose by those same swords to die,
When all the world was made for you ?

ENVOY :

Love's happiness had passed you by,
But there were other things to do.
Ladies, why did ye choose to die,
When all the world was made for you ?

K. GIBBERD
(*ST. HILDA'S HALL*)

WHEN I AM OLD

I OFTEN think that when I'm old and grey,
Mechanically living through each day,
That when like all the rest I've found my groove
With little room for heart or mind to move,
But just enough to eat and work and dress ;
And keep a failing temper more or less—
In tired sleep I'll sometimes creep away
Back down the years to some old Oxford way.

And on this daisied lawn again I'll lie,
And listen while the river folk go by ;
And through the trees I'll sometimes see the flash
Of punters' poles and hear the rhythmic splash
Of oars ; and over there again I'll see
The petalled path beneath the cherry-tree,
And love the hawthorn scent, the cuckoo's cry,
And Magdalen chiming while the spring runs by.

And you'll be there, dear phantom friend, and you,
And you familiar faces that I knew
So well ; and toward the ending of the day
We'll sit and talk—the old accustomed way,
Till in the mutual calm we'll see unfurled
The immeasurable vastness of the world
And I shall dream of all that I will do
With Life—and so will you, and you and you.

FAITH

WHEN a foam of snow is hurled
Under the bare black trees,
And rain is on the seas,
And winter on the world,
Yet, when I think of her,
I know where summer is.

When friends to-day forget
Ardours of yesterday,
And to-morrow turn away
As if we never met,
Yet, when I think of her,
I know where constancy is.

HILLS

AS I go inland
Lo ! my heart drooping
As a bird's in the grove
 when the shadow falls swooping
Of the hawk's wing down from a cloudless sky.

For the hills creep together,
Murmuring, conspiring ;
Solitude, poverty, sorrow desiring
For men that are born to dream and to die.

A prison land-locked,
A grave for the living,
And the ancient warders
 unsleeping, unforgiving,
Cordon after cordon, massing behind me.
I am in peril. I have left the sea.

SONG

" My heart was blithe at morning."

MY heart was blithe at morning,
For he was by my side,
And through the woods together
We wandered far and wide.

My heart was gay at noon-tide
Together on the lea
We lay, and heard the murm'ring
Of many a busy bee.

My heart was sad at even,
For in the cold stars' wake,
I laid him in the dark, dark grave
And, oh, my heart would break !

FRAGMENT FROM THE "LAMENT FOR BION," OF MOSCHUS

RAISE high, Sicilian Muses,
Raise high the mournful cry,
The mallows in the woodlands
 Whene'er they fade and die,
And the dill, and the green parsley,
 When they grow wan and sere,
Live on again, though dead a while,
 And flower another year.

But we, the great, the noble men,
 The mighty, and the wise,
Whene'er our term of life is past,
 And our frail body dies,
Lie down for ever, evermore
 Beneath earth's hollow deep,
And undisturbed for ever
 Lie low in death's long sleep.

MERCY HARVEY
(ST. HILDA'S HALL)

SONG

O H ! who hath seen Twilight the solemn-eyed ?
When the earth with a weary sigh
Turns unto her, as a widowed bride,
With the light all gone from the sky.
She walketh in solitariness,
Where still, shadowy waters gleam,
But her grey eyes are none the less
As if full of a troubled dream.

H. C. HARWOOD
(BALLIOL)

INCOMPATIBILITY

THERE shall be no more sorrow and no more pain.
Go you to your anger and I to my books again.
You loved me, but never have liked me, the issue was plain,
Woman, if you be woman, you live too late,
Never the man was suckled to be your mate,
Wed with a god and break him in battle with fate.
You are truth, and the world is illusion ; faith, it is doubt.
It wraps its disaster in darkness, and you shine out ;
And the liquor that drugs to endurance is not for your drought.
Pass on to the waste and the fell ! I stay, and forget
Your breasts and your hair and your laughter like suns that are set.
Despise me, forgive me, but leave me. I love you yet.

DEDICATION, OF AN UNWRITTEN MASTERPIECE, TO A WOMAN AS YET UNKNOWN

IF I have laboured seven years,
It was not for your heart.
Mine was the better part
And hope is bright amid the vapourous fears.
You are too close to me to need
The idle compliment
That it was my intent
To build your name above the ages' greed.
We are comrade adventurers ;
Here is my challenge hurled
Against the conspired world ;
You will have little time for flatterers,
An equal combatant . . . Or so,
While in the dark I groped
Vainly perhaps, I hoped,
And, when at length we meet and love, shall know.

LUISA HEWITT

(HOME STUDENT)

YOU lit your cigarette from mine,
And each increased the other's glow
Till the blue clouds began to blow
And two red stars began to shine.

Who knows, if then our lips had met,
A greater fire we might have fanned
Whose fragrant smoke had filled the land,
But left us ashes and regret.

AVE ATQUE VALE

ZEUS! whom Prometheus first defied and failed to quell,
Once, only once I call on you that cannot hear ;
Titans and monstrous Forms inspiring these with fear ;
Heroes enthroned in Heaven, of whom their children tell ;
Pan of the forest, fauns and dryads of the dell ;
Chryselephantine gods to Art and Athens dear,
Protectors of the deme, the spindle and the spear,—
Once, only once I give you greeting and—farewell.

Proud-vested charioteers of punctual sun and moon,
Racing and wrestling in your diverse course divine,
Ye stars of peace and war, ye rivers of the sea,
Greeting ! from one who will forget your name right soon ;
Farewell ! the while I pass, and nevermore repine
The Perfect God in Man alone constraining me.

R. M. HEWITT
(KEBLE)

ITER PERSICUM

WHEN I rode out of Ispahan
A thousand years ago,
My horse's hoofs were shod with gold,
My turban rolled with gems untold,
And the people louted low.

My poet rode along with me
And sang of old Irán,
Of Rústem and of Rudabeh,
And whiled away the summer day
As only poets can.

But now I march the Persian road
With the devil of a pack ;
The jackals howl as we go by,
And the fellows sigh and curse and cry,
And my clothes are like a sack.

And the palaces of Ispahan
Are full of owls and bats,
And the truest poet that ever I knew,
Whose roses grew in the Syrian dew,
Lies dead at Davos Platz.

GAUDIUM IN COELO

I DREAMED that I was dead, and after
My soul had passed its mortal bars
I caught an echo of rolling laughter
Across the intervening stars.

And all my fear was changed to wonder,
I knew the rapture of the blest ;
To hear the immortal sons of thunder
Applaud each day the immortal jest.

E. E. ST. L. HILL
(KEBLE)

PARTING

THE sky illumed by evening's magic light
Reflected in the lake seems opal blue.
The autumn sun glows with a radiance bright
That gives to everything an orange hue.
The evening of the year draws on to night.

No sound of arms within this hallowed place
Comes to disturb us with the thought of strife.
Unhindered I may gaze upon your face,
My jewel of priceless worth—my Love—my Life—
Forgetting I must leave you for a space.

The woods around us, clothed in sombre gold,
Robed for the great Death Pageant of the year,
Grow dark. I strain you to my breast and hold
You there, whispering in your ear
Stories of love you know ere they are told.

Now I must go. But, when the blue-bells make
The woods a carpet azure as the sky,
Once more my darling in my arms I'll take,
Once more we'll be together—you and I—
And dream our dreams again and never wake.

TWO SONGS

I

THICK-FLOWERED is the trellis
That hides our joys

From prying eyes of malice

And all annoys,

And we lie rosily bowered.

Through the long afternoons

And evenings endlessly

Drawn out, when summer swoons

In perfume windlessly,

Sounds our light laughter,

With whispered words between

And silent kisses.

None but the flowers have seen

Our white caresses—

Flowers and the bright-eyed birds.

II

Men of a certain age

Grow sad remembering

Their youth's libertinage,

Drinking and chambering.

She, whom devotedly

Once they solicited,

Proves all too bloatedly

Gross when revisited

Twenty years after,

Sordid years.

Oh, bitter laughter

And bitter tears !

SONG OF POPLARS

SHEPHERD, to yon tall poplars tune your flute :
Let them pierce, keenly, subtly shrill,
The slow blue rumour of the hill ;
Let the grass cry with an anguish of evening gold,
And the great sky be mute.

Then hearken how the poplar trees unfold
Their buds, yet close and gummed and blind,
In airy leafage of the mind,
Rustling in silvery whispers the twin-hued scales
That fade not nor grow old.

" Poplars and fountains and you cypress spires
Springing in dark and rusty flame,
Seek you aught that hath a name ?
Or say, say : Are you all an upward agony
Of undefined desires ?

" Say, are you happy in the golden march
Of sunlight all across the day ?
Or do you watch the uncertain way
That leads the withering moon on cloudy stairs
Over the heaven's wide arch ?

" Is it towards sorrow or towards joy you lift
The sharpness of your trembling spears ?
Or do you seek, through the grey tears
That blur the sky, in the heart of the triumphing blur,
A deeper, calmer rift ?"

So ; I have tuned my music to the trees,
And there were voices, dim below
Their shrillness, voices swelling slow
In the blue murmur of hills, and a golden cry
And then vast silences.

C. R. JURY
(*MAGDALEN*)

A SONNET TO A FRIEND

YOUNG bright-plumed eagle, prince of pure heaven's fire,
Inhabitant of glory clothed in light,
Exalt me to this new triumphant pyre
That burns the shades and monsters of our night,
Vouchsafe thy spirit ; touch me with the power
So to desire, and so maintain my voice
As thou, who in thy fair ascending hour
Hawk'st in the top of morning at thy joys ;
O mortal splendour in immortal beams,
Or deathless ghost, who buildest out of dust
An edifice of temporal flame which seems
Beyond the movement of our change and rust,
Though it must die ; O sheer delight above me,
Fountain of undescended love, I love thee.

AN EPITAPH

YOU who shall come, exalt these childless dead
As your great fathers, from whose fire you are bred ;
The dead beget you now, for now they give
Their hope of sons, that you, their sons, may live.

MARGARET LEIGH
(SOMERVILLE)

TWO EPITAPHS

I. ON A DIPLOMAT.

O H, who will bid me rise again
That gambled with the souls of men ?
Those whose lives I signed away
Will meet me at the Judgment Day,
My dead : can *they* forgive and pray ?
All honest men, pray for me, and pray well,
Lest true men's curses send the false to hell.

II. ON A PROFITEER.

I fattened on the blood and tears
Of these long laborious years ;
Out of loss came forth my gain,
Watered by another's pain :
Who shall bid me rise again ?
Pray for me, all poor men, and pray right well,
Lest poor men's curses bring the rich to hell.

SONNET: THE JOURNALIST

HE called for blood, and would not shed his own,
He sat at ease, and sent young men to die
With his strong pen ; he was the enemy
Stalking at noontide, by whose hand were sown
Rank tares among us—love of country grown
To poisonous cant, and blind hostility.
He forged a chain to lead the people by,
A chain of words, rattling with strident tone.
He battenèd on men's selfishness and fear,
He pulled the strings that shook their statesmen down ;
The people were content to sit and hear
His platitudes, and tremble at his frown,
And followed him with meek attentive ear
Till His Mendacity assumed the crown.

THE INCANTATION

EVIL birds of evil feather
Night and storm are met together,
Bitter gale and dripping wrack
Unforetold by almanack.
Come, Lucasta, bolt the door
While I grave upon the floor
Circle wide, and strew around
Pentacles to guard the ground
When the solemn fiends appear
In fulfilment of our prayer ;
For though Cimon scorn thy sight
He shall sleep with thee to-night.

Wond'rest not how I, a crone
Whom no crippled lout would own
His paramour, have strength to fling
The loveless 'neath his true love's wing.
The old are strong, the young are fair,
And thou, wan leaf, whom eager care
Spirits to this world-shop of mine,
Shalt for this hour see things divine.
Thou trustest that my ugliness
Shall dissipate thy soul's distress.
Yea, though he loathe Lucasta bright,
Cimon shall sleep with her to-night.

See yon dun familiar toad
That infecteth my abode
With sage humours ; stroke his head.
Now he sleeps as he were dead.

The Incantation

Yet must he hearken to the charm
Watching that we take no harm,
For spirits are fickle as men are
And called to help may come to war.
He wakes ; now will I cease my croak
And read the grand words from this book
That he who recks not of our rite
May sleep with her who loves to-night.

Arise, ye majesties of flame
Exhorted by Jehovah's name,
That all things to itself hath won,
The almighty Tetragrammaton.
Paymon, Belphegor, ye that err,
Tried spaniel-friends to Lucifer
And him whose red and gusty eyes
Captain the legions of the flies,
Attend with ceremonious hum,
Conjure the light o' love to come
Infirm of step, infirm of sight,
To sleep with her who loves to-night.

Lucasta, see the lamp burns blue.
Spirits, have we this boon of you ?
In the smoke their faces nod,
He shall come though he were God.
Shake not, girl, thy love they say
Conquers—Spirits frisk away ;
By the powers that raised you, hence
To your depths. Ye have licence.
So, they are vanished. Why so frail ?
Once more the wick gleams yellow pale,
The smokewreaths whirl to left and right,
Cimon shall sleep with thee to-night.

The Incantation

He comes ; his hand is on the latch,
The owlet shrieks above the thatch,
Unbolt, unbolt—scatter the yew,
The tripod, and the cauldron's brew.
Cimon, Lucasta, hails thee now,
The star of fate is on his brow,
His eyes grow moist, his bosom warms,
Receive him in thy weary arms,
Loveliest ! By Thessalian might
He sleeps with her he loves to-night.

CLOSING LINES FROM
"POLYPHEMUS HIS PASSION :
A PASTORAL "

THE SHEPHERD. A GIRL.

Shepherd. **T**HUS found he his loved Galatea fled
With Acis ! What rage ensued thou knowest.

Deceived, dejected, foiled, and overthrown
In hoarse distraction a full sev'n days' term
He ranged, but on the eighth no more was glimpsed
Striding from vale to vale nor, raging, heard
Splintering the pine-slope nigh the precipice
With fist far flung nor with a desolate
Thunder of voice, volleyed from scarp to jag,
Dislodging from steep snowfields friths compact
In downward avalanche : less loud than he.
And no tide had we of him, save by chance
The while I wandered seeking a strayed goat
Through seaward vales, I happen'd on him.

Girl.

Ah !

Lubberly still poor wretch ? or quiet grown ?

Shepherd. He on an ocean pinnacle of rock
Sat, scowling, motionless. In truth he seemed
Rather a further buttress of the crag
Than a giant, helpless and unhappy being.
About his brooding bulk all day the birds,
The slippery swallow, the pois'd martin,
Lifted or swept a-scatter ev'n as when,
Chatting, such gad around the ravaged mien
Of the colossal Pharaoh or twin gods
Hawk-headed and immense of ancient Egypt.

Closing Lines from

Thus grieved he. And the huge begnarlèd hands
Pillared his jaw. A chillness gloomed his face
As on bare hills shadow of moveless cloud.
Nor spake he aught. But when the sun raged high
Grappling a rock he dashed it 'gainst his breast
And roared till the golden-green sea blackened
And spouting drove, loud with careering gulls,
Before his gusty breath ; but passion spent
Dropping then pined, while from the single eye
One tear, as huge and hot as Phlegethon,
Fell in a hissing flood.

Girl.

Alas, poor brute !

And yet I laugh.

Shepherd.

Longtime in sufferance

Bowed he his massy head, quite dumb with grief.
But, at the last, confusedly arousing
His sluggish hands, groped for and found his pipes
Twin, dry, boughless trunks of beech fire-hollowed
And with huge cinder bored. This pair he set
To cave-like mouth, then, pursing hairy lips,
Vented, with monster fingers laid on stops,
His heart's deep sorrow : 'twas a wounding sound.

Girl. And was it angry, then, the giant's plaint ?

Shepherd. Angry 'twas not : though anger in it spake
As of a rebel turning eye to heav'n
With moody imprecation natural
To one so crossed from birth. Melancholy
Lent majesty to strains uncouth. He mourned
The gift of might which is his mightiest foe.
Mourned ! though the dire pipes themselves rebelling
Came apt not to his hand. With rage he shook
Yet, obstinate, subdued them to his mood
So that they brimmed the dusky lower air,
The fire-strewn skies, flushed cliffs and tawny sea
With the beauty borne of desolation.
Thus lingered he.

“Polyphemus his Passion : a Pastoral ”

Girl. And of the tune itself,
Ugly, was it ?
Shepherd. Listen : when twilight fell,
While the near wave lapsed with but seldom foam,
Darkling against the light foretells the moon,
He still played on. “ Strange end,” thought I, “ thou hast,
Poor fool whose all of life is ended now,
Saving the music thou canst make of it.”
Since, as I think, his heart is shipwrecked now :
Heart, but not song ! For as the night waxed late
Somewhat of beauty found he and with beauty
Somewhat of solace. To the last I listened
The while th’ unbroken moon rocked in the tide
And multitudes of sea-sprites, glistening,
Rose up in choir, but, sudden, hushed to hear
Such grief pine on. Thus somewhat was the sound—
Like to the muffled wind among the crags
When night is clear, without or stars or moon,
And lightless clouds drift on a lightless sky ;
Or as the mournful blowing of the waves,
Which in the pyloned gloom of northern cave
Nighly with flood soon-swallowed and discharge
Of pouring foam, deep tide and troubled ebb,
Makes profound plaint and dreary melody
To lightless waste, huge night and solemn stars.
Such was the Cyclops’ music.

Girl. Ah, poor soul !

Shepherd. Dost weep ?

Girl. Yes, shepherd.

Shepherd. Fie, now ; comfort thee !

The gods wax angry at a lass’s tears
Who has no whit to cry for. Thus say I,
Those there are who ev’n by living darken
The lives of such as are less passionate
Yet in their fall, by ev’n the full measure

“ Polyphemus his Passion : a Pastoral ”

That they o'ertopped us, must we mourn for them,
Such wonder has Life bared.

Girl.

Maybe 'tis so ;

Still I am sorry.

Shepherd.

Yield thee now thine arm.

So : round my neck as mine sinks now round thine. . . .

Evening falls. Hear the brook in the spinney :

Thy very voice.

Girl.

And . . . is yon star Venus ?

Shepherd. Aye : Venus 'tis. Thou hast eyes like heaven.

Girl. Love is a pretty thing. Kiss me, sweet shepherd.

THE OPENING OF THE GRAVE OF ARTHUR AND GUINEVERE AT GLASTONBURY*

ONE slender relic from the wreck of death,
One golden hair from that far age,
A gleaming memory, a momentary breath
Of mystic times and Merlin sage !

This only trace of that far-famous queen
And of her beauty causing sin
Recalled what Lancelot had whilom seen,
What fame his compeers sought to win.

Swift as a monk stoops down to grasp that hair
The golden glint dissolves to dust,
And naught of that old glory lieth there
But bones, and armour gone to rust.

Seek ye not thus to clutch the golden past
Of legend and romance, for so
Its splendour will dissolve and nothing last
But Now, and dust of long ago.

* A tradition says that the grave was opened in the time of Henry II., and that all that remained of the royal pair was a hair, which too turned to dust as a monk stooped down to pick it up.

DOROTHY L. SAYERS
(SOMERVILLE)

PYGMALION

THEREFORE one day, as all flesh must, she died,
Just as the mowers brought the last load in
From happy meadows warm with summer-tide,
And through the open casement, far and thin,
The nightingale's first music did begin.

"Love is the sum of this world's whole delight,
Love," said the bird, "the ending of desire,
Love brought us, timid, forth to the lovely light,
Love the sole outlet, love, both toil and hire,
Love, with whose death the songs of life expire."

Yet, as the limbs turned stone and bitter-cold,
Widowed Pygmalion sat beside the bed,
Huddling dry-eyed to see the new grown old
Again so strangely, and his clamorous head
Jarred him with discourse ; and at length he said :

"Marble, my white girl, marble ! Cyprian thighs
And amorous bosom all made chaste once more,
As though no lips had ever kissed thine eyes
To slumber—virgin as they were, before
The feet of Venus glowed along the floor ! . . .

"Thy beauty should have made the workman blind
That found thee buried in the dust of thrones
Hereafter, when our pomps are left behind
Like some strange, sprawling scale of barbarous tones,
Our temples turned to curious heaps of stones ;

Pygmalion

“When by the highways merchant folk shall go
Three feet of earth above our walls and towers,
And other than Grecian ships bear to and fro
New wares, new men, and all as brief as flowers—
Thou hadst outlasted all that time devours.

“But thou art dead ; thou art flesh and art dead ;
The grave will be thy lover, thy round breast
Nourish the worm, while, shred by ghastly shred,
The mouth that laughed, the fingers that caressed,
Wither, O dearest of my works and best ! . . .

“What have I gained ? some mornings when my soul
Leaped out of me into the arms of day,
When the world, like a chariot, span in my own control,
Times when I saw the beech-tree leaves a-sway
And knew how green they were and far from grey.

“Say I learned joy—this was indeed a gain ;
But can I face the reckoning unafraid ?
For joy I bartered, first, that ancient pain
Which stabbed me into vision ; next, betrayed
All that men looked for in me ; thus I paid.

“Yea, I that rated at a small amount
That strange, cold jewel, purchased unawares,
Men’s gratitude—I that no longer count
For anything in any man’s affairs,
Am doubtful now ; thus the gods grant our prayers.

“Ay me undone ! The world cries out to me :
‘Pygmalion the sculptor, where art thou ?’—
Buried indeed, O buried hopelessly
Fathom-deep under, fathom-deep under now—
The curious rootlets pry about his brow . . .

Pygmalion

“ There is no remedy ; what is changed is changed ;
No skill can rub out wrinkles from the heart,
Nor even God knit friends that are estranged
As innocently again as at the start,
Since they must keep the memory of that smart

“ For good or evil still. So I return
Never to that old quiet which asked no beat
Of answering pulse, content alone to burn,
While no fierce hand might fret thy bosom sweet,
Nor any lover come betwixt thy feet.

“ I wrought thee for the world, and then thou wast
Immortal—and I wept uncomforted ;
But since I made thee mine—O thou art lost
To me and all men. I was glad,” he said,
“ But thou art dead, O thou art dead, art dead.”

HELEN SIMPSON
(HOME STUDENT)

THE HEAD OF THE TABLE ; DECODERS W.R.N.S.

EVERY day at ten to three,
Be the weather wet or warm,
I doff my identity,
And assume a uniform.
Clad in this I sally out,
Cause considerable stir,
Order nobodies about
As becomes an Officer ;
Freeze the surreptitious smile
With a chill severity—
Longing all the weary while
For the unregenerate Me.
But when my release is earned
And I am at home, secure,
My identity has turned
Unexpectedly demure.
Why ? I enter rather late
And My manner when we meet,
Seems, I fear, to indicate
The repentant indiscreet.
I, thus tantalized by Me
Spend an irritated day ;
Now the question seems to be—
What goes on when I'm away ?

AEROPLANE, JUNE 6TH.

I WAS watching as you flew
Circling in the summer sky ;
Round about you thoughts I threw,
Every bit as swift as you,
Every bit as high.

Out of cloud a palace springs,
Domes and minarets and towers,
Bastions, where the trumpet rings
And my topmost turret swings
High about the showers.

You were captain in the skies
Nimble as a darting sword—
Of the company of spies
Who my castle from surprise
Vigilantly ward.

Wheeling, darting, unaware
That you were the warden bold
Of my palace towering there,
Of its battlements of air
And its roofs of gold.

All unheeding trumpet calls
Down you plunged from out the blue ;
Warderless the silver wells,
And my airy castle falls
Swifter far than you.

RUFUS PRAYS

IN the darkening church,
Where but a few had stayed,
At the Litany Desk
The idiot knelt and prayed.

Rufus, stunted, uncouth.
The one son of his mother :
“ Eh, I’d sooner ’ave Rufie,”
She said, “ than many another.

“ ’E’s so useful about the ’ouse
And so gentle as ’e can be :
And ’e gets up early o’ mornin’s
To make me a cup o’ tea.”

The formal evensong
Had passed over his head :
He sucked his thumb, and squinted,
And dreamed, instead.

Now while the organ boomed
To few who still were there,
At the Litany Desk
The idiot made his prayer :

“ Gawd bless Muther,
’N’ make Rufie a good lad.
Take Rufie to Heaven,
’N’ forgive him when he’s bad.

“ ’N’ early mornin’s in Heaven
’E’ll make Muther’s tea,
’N’ a cup for the Lord Jesus
’N’ a cup for Thee.”

IN THE GARDEN

A SOFT and flowered vision
Came on me as a breeze
In summer, and I saw
The souls of men like bees.

Up stairs of orchard foam
With balustrade of may,
Stagger, a mazy cluster,
Drunk with the scented day.

Then strong from newer honey,
With brighter pollen shod,
The little souls went buzzing
Up to the Hives of God.

PERMISSION

NOT till, fallen swooning at the last
Round, heart-broken at the cruel pace,
Thrown out useless from my working place
Sickness, scorn, and bitterness to taste,
Not till hard days have me crucified
To a desk, the close nights to a bed
Comfortless, and all my gain unmade,
All the towers brought low that were my pride,
May I seek the silent golden tor,
Sleep beside long crumbled architraves,
See the desolate glory of the waves
Snarling, like tigers on a lone lee shore.

SUMMER

IN blatant light the grasses look
Like bronzen swords of green,
The hillock-tops simmer and smoke,
The stark road thrusts between.

No mild opacity of cloud
Transmutes the harshness, where
Like stars of newly spattered blood
Kempt cottage flowers stare.

A blast of Hell gets up to flout
The sharp metallic trees,
And hungry insects haste about
Their cruel purposes.

RIVER-POOLS

WERE I a shadow in a pool
I would not live, I would not fear to die ;
But only, faint and cool,
I'd pass my days of unreality
In passive contemplation of the sky ;
And no desire should shake me.
And no denial break me,
Ah, fool,
Thou art no shadow in a pool.

Were I a shadow in a pool
I could not love, I could not thrill with hate ;
But, ashy-pale and cool,
Through endless meadows moving desolate
I would outgaze the sky dispassionate,
With never grief to move me.
And never friend to love me.
Glad fool,
Thou art no shadow in a pool !

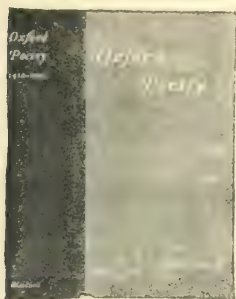
LIFE AND I

LIFE and I are a pair of lovers :
Life is only as old as I.
Here he kissed me, with no one by,
Here the day long will we lie,
On a hillside swept with the calling of plovers,
Until the stooping midnight covers
Life and me with the star-wrought sky.

Life, come kiss me ! Joy, come tell me,
Will you love me still to-morrow ?
Will you ravish me and sell me,
Love of mine, to sorrow ?

“ Sweet, come kiss me ! Sweet, come tell me
No misgivings of the morrow !
But . . . there are two ways to spell me :
I am Joy—and Sorrow.”

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